

AMERICAN REGISTER FOR STEAMER CATANIA.

MAY 17, 1898.—Referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

Mr. PAYNE, from the Committee on the Merchant Marine and Fisheries,
submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany S. 3953.]

The Committee on the Merchant Marine and Fisheries report back Senate bill No. 3953, to provide an American register for the steamer *Catania*, with the recommendation that the same do pass.

The facts are stated in the Senate report on this bill, which is hereto annexed.

[Senate Report No. 1075, Fifty-fifth Congress, second session.]

The Committee on Commerce, to whom was referred the bill (S. 3953) to provide an American register for the steamer *Catania*, having duly considered the same, recommend the passage of the bill.

The facts of the case are fully presented in the accompanying sworn statement of the owner, and are substantiated by documentary evidence presented to the committee.

Speedy action on the bill is desirable, in view of the fact that the vessel is to be chartered by the Government of the United States for immediate use as a hospital ship, as will be seen by the letter of the Assistant Secretary of War, which is annexed.

DEAR SIR: Referring to the bill (S. 3953) to provide an American register for the steamer *Catania*, I beg to submit the following statement of the case, with accompanying evidence:

I, Montague Stanley Tweedie, a citizen of the United States, born in the city of New York and doing business at No. 9 Stone street, New York City, am the owner of the *Catania*, having purchased her as a wreck, through the Tweedie Trading Company, for the sum of \$8,500. The Tweedie Trading Company purchased the wreck from its foreign owners, Messrs. M. Sloman & Co., Mrs. L. Broderman, widow of C. A. Broderman, Mr. John A. Edye, and J. H. A. Stroberck, of Hamburg, for the sum of \$8,500 (see Exhibit A), and have since conveyed the vessel to me (see Exhibit B). The agents of the foreign owners aforesaid, Messrs. Funch, Edye & Co., have certified that the *Catania* was offered for sale to numerous parties, that only two offers were received for the vessel, and that the Tweedie Company's offer of \$8,500 was the best offer received, and accordingly the vessel was sold to the Tweedie Company. (See certificate of Funch, Edye & Co., agents, Exhibit C.)

The *Catania* is an iron schooner-rigged vessel of 2,198 tons gross register. (See full particulars, Exhibit D.)

The *Catania* was wrecked November 4, 1896, by stranding on a coral reef off the coast of Brazil while on a passage from Rio de Janeiro to New York. (See protest E.) Her injuries are recited in the survey made upon the vessel when she reached

the port of New York. The survey was made by Lloyds surveyors, Messrs. Congdon & Mancor, N. F. Lasseo, surveyor to German Lloyds, and Frank S. Martin, ship engineer and surveyor. (See survey, Exhibit F.) While the vessel was able to reach New York under her own steam it was found when she arrived that she was badly damaged and unseaworthy. These surveyors have sworn that upon the arrival of the *Catania* at New York, and when she was surveyed by them, she was in a badly damaged and unseaworthy condition, requiring extensive repairs to put her in a first-class sea-going condition, and that they are satisfied that the vessel's injuries were the result of her stranding on a coral reef off Brazil as aforesaid. (See affidavits of surveyors, Exhibit G.)

Bids for repairs to the *Catania* in accordance with the specifications attached to survey (Exhibit F) and prepared by surveyors, were requested from the following leading shipbuilding companies on the Atlantic coast: Morgan Iron Works, New York; John N. Robbins Company, Brooklyn; Quintard Iron Works, New York; Morse Iron Works, Brooklyn; Donald and J. McNeil, Brooklyn (Columbia Engineering Works); Reed & Duff, New York; Jas. Reilly Repair and Supply Company, New York; Lewis Nixon, Elizabeth, N. J.; Cramp Shipbuilding Company, Philadelphia; Newport News Shipbuilding Company, Newport News, Va.; Harlan & Hollingsworth, Wilmington, Del.

A copy of the letter of my agents, Messrs. Bowring & Archibald, submitting the specifications to the various shipbuilding concerns, is submitted herewith. (Exhibit H.)

Only two bids were received, one being from the Columbia Engineering Works, of Brooklyn, to do the work at \$24,270 (Exhibit I), and the other from the Morse Iron Works, of Brooklyn, N. Y., to do the work for \$18,975. (See Exhibit J.) The Morse Works bid, being the lower of the two, was accepted, and the work covered by their bid was performed. The receipt of the Morse Iron Works for \$19,366.10, paid them by me for their work, is submitted herewith. (Exhibit K.)

After work had begun on the *Catania* it was found that further repairs beyond those estimated were required, consisting of building over an entire new shelter deck and extensive further repairs to boilers and engines. (Exhibit K.)

This work was done at a cost of \$34,038.61.

I have also paid for dry docking in connection with the surveys and repairing of the *Catania* the sum of \$2,800. (See Exhibit K.)

To recapitulate—

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Repairs according to specifications | \$19,366.10 |
| Repairs in addition to those covered by specifications..... | 34,038.61 |
| Dry docking | 2,800.00 |
| Total repairs..... | 56,204.71 |

It will be seen that the repairs, amounting to \$56,204.71, are in excess of the law's requirements, being more than three times the purchase price of \$8,500. As this vessel could be registered under the general law but for the fact that her wreck occurred outside of the limits of the United States instead of within the same, I hope you and your committee will favorably report S. 3952.

I desire to state that as soon as the *Catania* is registered she will be used by the United States Government as a hospital ship.

Very truly,

M. STANLEY TWEEDIE.

Hon. WILLIAM P. FRYE,

Chairman Committee on Commerce, United States Senate.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, *City of Washington:*

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 11th day of May, 1898.

[SEAL.]

R. B. NIXON, *Notary Public.*

WAR DEPARTMENT, OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY,
Washington, D. C., May 12, 1898.

DEAR SIR: It is the desire of the War Department to charter the steamship *Catania*, owned by Mr. Montague Stanley Tweedie, of 640 Madison avenue, New York City, for military use during the war with Spain. I have the honor, therefore, to request that she may be put in commission at the earliest practicable date.

Very respectfully,

G. D. MEIKLEJOHN,
Assistant Secretary of War.

Hon. W. P. FRYE,

Chairman Committee on Commerce, United States Senate, Washington, D. C.